

top health

How's Your Health?



The following is a list of some of the most important self-care measures for improving your health.

Check the statements that apply to you – 7 or 8 is good and 9 or 10 is excellent. Use the results to identify new health habits you hope to achieve in the coming months.

- ☐ I stay within 10 to 15 pounds of my healthiest **weight**.
- ☐ I follow a schedule for preventive **screening** and **exams** with my health care provider, optician and dentist.
- ☐ I accumulate 30 to 60 minutes of **exercise** most days of the week.
- ☐ I eat a variety of **fruits** (at least 2 cups) and **vegetables** (at least 2½ cups) daily.
- ☐ I **limit** foods high in saturated fat.
- ☐ I avoid **alcohol** or limit intake to 2 drinks a day (men) or 1 a day (women).
- ☐ I (a) don't **smoke** or (b) have asked my provider for help quitting.
- ☐ I manage work **stress** in healthy ways, such as regular exercise.
- ☐ I feel generally **positive** about life.
- ☐ I **relax** nearly every day.
- ☐ I have a network of **friends** for mutual support and fun.
- ☐ I get 7 to 9 hours of **sleep** a day.

▶ Note: This is not intended to be medical advice. Talk to your provider about your individual needs.



Strength Training for Life

You don't need to be an Olympic champion to protect muscle mass and build strength. The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) offers these guidelines for beginners.

1. **Work each major muscle group** – chest, shoulders, arms, back, abdomen and legs – 2 or 3 30-minute sessions per week.
2. **Select 1 or 2 exercises per muscle group.** To improve strength, do 8 to 12 repetitions for each exercise against a resistance that's hard for you to repeat 10 times. Perform 2 to 4 sets of each exercise per workout.

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best bits



Are you at risk for glaucoma? It's an eye disease that gradually causes blindness. People at increased risk include those of African, Asian and Hispanic descent; older than age 60; with hypertension or high nearsightedness; or with a family history of the disease. The best way to protect your sight from glaucoma is to discover it early. Get tested routinely, especially if you have increased risk. **January is Glaucoma Awareness Month.**

■ **New research published in the Archives of Internal Medicine suggests that loneliness may cause physical decay and an early death.** Researchers followed more than 1,500 U.S. seniors for more than 5 years. They found the lonely ones were twice as likely to have physical difficulties with their daily needs – cleaning, washing clothes, shopping, fixing dinner – and twice as likely to die. So, if you know a lonely person why not “friend” them, and I don't mean online. *By Zorba Paster, MD*

■ **Smoking rates among American teens dropped** between 2004 and 2010 – from 12% to 8%, and among young adults from 40% to 34%, according to the latest Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services National Survey of more than 300,000 people aged 12 to 25.

“A healthy attitude is contagious but don't wait to catch it from others. Be a carrier.” – **Tom Stoppard**”

This Edition ➡ Alzheimer's Update
➡ Emotional Eating
➡ Workplace Safety

? Work Stress? Turn to page 2. ➡





Alzheimer's Update

Research is accelerating in a worldwide quest to find new treatments that stop, slow or even prevent **Alzheimer's disease (AD)**, the most common form of dementia.

Investigating the disease has produced 5 FDA-approved AD drugs that treat symptoms and temporarily help memory and thinking in approximately half the people who take them. Researchers believe successful treatment may eventually involve a "cocktail" of medications aimed at several targets, much like treatments for AIDS and certain cancers.

Your chance of developing Alzheimer's may increase as a result of conditions that damage your heart or blood vessels, including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes and heart disease. Up to 80% of people with AD also have cardiovascular disease. Protecting your heart and vascular system may be the most helpful approach to protecting your brain.

Evidence also suggests exercise may directly benefit brain cells by increasing blood and oxygen flow and through its proven benefits to the cardiovascular system. **Best advice:** Get 30 minutes of aerobic exercise several times a week.

▶ To learn more about AD or how you can participate in dementia research, visit the Alzheimer's Association at alz.org.

Managing Stress at Work

More than 36% of workers report they're typically "stressed out" during their workday, based on the 2011 Stress in the Workplace survey of 1,546 U.S. workers by the American Psychological Association.

For most workers, it's the everyday, annoying hassles that make up the bulk of work stress – communication failures, poor teamwork, delays, and numerous other obstacles that interfere with work.

Other stressors are harder to control. Frequent changes in technology and an unpredictable economy produce confusion and worry. Above all, we're required to perform responsibly and effectively. That includes learning to tolerate stressors big and small. These steps may help:

- **Talk with colleagues or friends you trust** about the work issues you're facing. They may provide insights or offer ideas for coping.
- **Stay flexible.** Frequent change in the workplace is normal and potentially positive.
- **Be vigilant about your health.** Get regular exercise and plenty of sleep, and eat a healthy diet. When you feel strong, you'll cope better.
- **Believe in yourself.** When you feel uncertain about the future, recalling past achievements can help restore your confidence, hope and sense of control.



Keep your perspective. Ask yourself, *Is this thing worth stressing about?* In most cases, it won't be. When you see the difference, you can control the stress rather than let it control you.



self-care

Heads Up:

Is It a Concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury usually caused by a blow to the head. Most concussions are mild and temporary and do not cause a loss of consciousness, so you could have a concussion without realizing it. That's why it's good to learn the warning signs of concussion.

Some symptoms may be immediate and often include headache, nausea, vomiting and confusion or memory lapses.

Some symptoms may be delayed by hours or days after injury:

- Trouble concentrating and remembering
- Sensitivity to light and noise
- Sleep disturbances
- Disorders of taste and smell
- Slurred speech

Concussion symptoms in children include the signs above, and:

- Listlessness, fatigue and crankiness
- Change in eating or play habits
- Loss of balance

See a physician within 1 to 2 days if you or your child experiences a head injury with any of the symptoms listed above.

Get emergency care for anyone who has a head injury with:

- Loss of consciousness lasting more than a minute
- Repeated vomiting
- Seizures or convulsions
- Vision problems
- Serious difficulty with mental or physical function
- Symptoms that worsen over time

Rest as much as possible and do not return to vigorous physical activity without your provider's approval. A second impact on the head could be fatal.



Help a Loved One with Diabetes

Diabetes is a disease that must be watched every day to avoid serious complications. Whether you're a parent, spouse or grown child of someone with diabetes, your support can be a great help to your loved one.

First, do some research. There's a lot to learn about diabetes. Start online at yourdiabetesinfo.org. Check out local support groups that teach living with diabetes.

Discuss ways of coping with diabetes.

Talk to your loved one about things that are hard or easy to manage. Review personal health goals, such as routine glucose monitoring, that you might help with, and study the best ways to track these goals. Also talk about any depression or negative feelings your loved one may be having.

Important: Encourage your loved one to communicate thoroughly with his or her providers. Make a list of questions before each appointment and make sure you understand the answers.

Get regular exercise together and explore healthy, tasty recipes that will aid blood glucose control. Both steps are vital to maintaining healthy insulin levels.



Cooking Tip

Fresh herbs are available in many varieties year-round.

To store, wrap them in damp paper towels, place loosely in plastic bags and refrigerate. They will keep 4 to 5 days; discard if the leaves turn dark. Don't rinse herbs until ready to use. For leafy herbs, such as parsley, basil and cilantro, put their stems in a glass of water, cover loosely with a plastic bag and refrigerate. To maximize their taste, add fresh herbs 3 to 4 minutes before cooking stops.



nutrition watch

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

What's Eating You?



There's 1 vital reason why you should eat: You feel hungry. However, many people use food to cope with boredom, stress, anger and other negative emotions. This is emotional eating.

Hunger vs. emotional eating:

Emotions can be so tied to food that you reach for treats without realizing it. Learn to recognize the difference:

Hunger	Emotional eating
Occurs gradually	Comes on suddenly
You stop eating when you're full	You keep eating when you're full
Any food will do	You crave specific foods

Ask yourself:

Find out if you're an emotional eater. For 1 week, keep a food journal with these 3 columns:

1. What food I ate.
2. How much I ate.
3. How I felt when I ate (hungry, tired, happy, lonely, bored, etc.).

After 1 week, look for patterns.

Do you always eat sweets when you feel tired? Do French fries pop up whenever you're stressed? Recognizing emotional eating habits and the foods that trigger them is the first step in changing your relationship with food.

To overcome these habits:

- Tame stress with a walk or a talk with a friend rather than food.
- Ask yourself if you're truly hungry before you reach for food.
- Don't buy your trigger junk food. You can't eat what you don't have.
- Replace junk food with healthier foods (e.g., an apple instead of a cookie).
- Reduce the portion size of unhealthy treats.

Sometimes emotional eating signals a more serious mental health issue such as depression.

If you feel your habit is beyond your control, seek the advice of a qualified health care provider.



Tomato Mushroom Penne with Herbs

EASY | RECIPE

From Personal Best®

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cups fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 3 tbsp chopped shallots
- 2 cups ripe cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 tbsp fresh oregano, chopped (or 1 tsp dried)
- 1 tbsp fresh basil, chopped (or 1 tsp dried)
- ½ lb penne pasta (or any pasta you prefer)

1. In a medium skillet, heat oil over medium temp. Sauté mushrooms and shallots 3-4 minutes; add tomatoes and sauté another 5-6 minutes, until vegetables are soft.
2. Stir in broth, reduce heat and simmer 15 minutes; in the last 2 minutes, stir in herbs.
3. Meanwhile, cook pasta as directed. Spoon sauce over pasta and serve.

MAKES 3, 2-cup, SERVINGS.

282 calories | 15g protein | 7g total fat | 1g sat fat | 3g mono fat | .5g poly fat
| 0mg cholesterol | 50g carbs | 6g sugar | 6g fiber | 48mg sodium

Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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expert advice

By Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP

Q: Whole grain vs. multi-grain?



A: **Whole grain** contains the entire grain kernel. All parts of the kernel are present including the outer coat, or bran; the middle starchy layer, or endosperm; and the inner layer, or germ. Whole-grain food products must supply similar amounts of the bran, endosperm and germ as the original grain.

Multi-grain products don't need to meet the standards for whole grain. They contain a variety of grains, but the main ingredient is usually white flour. This flour has only the starchy endosperm without the bran and germ.

Whole-grain products provide all the naturally occurring nutrients of the entire grain. Top nutrients include fiber, iron, zinc, copper, magnesium, vitamins B and E, protein, carbohydrates and essential fatty acids.



To find whole-grain products, look on the label for *whole grain* listed as the first ingredient, or shop for *100% whole grain*. It's best to eat 100% whole-grain foods, which include popcorn, shredded wheat and whole-grain pasta.

QuikRisk Assessment: New Year Workplace Safety

Is your work area safe? You may be surprised as hidden hazards are everywhere.

Check all that apply:

- ☐ My workspace is clean and uncluttered.
- ☐ There are no cords or obstructions in aisles or walkways.
- ☐ There are no stacks of papers or boxes near my work area.
- ☐ Fire doors are closed and stay closed.
- ☐ Exits are easily accessible.
- ☐ There is no glare on my computer screen.

- ☐ All flammable or combustible liquids are stored properly.
- ☐ Overhead lighting and task lighting are bright enough for me to see.
- ☐ Filing cabinet doors are closed.
- ☐ Equipment is working; all nonworking equipment is labeled as nonworking.

▶▶ **How did you do?** If you checked all of these, you're on your way to a safe day. If not, re-evaluate your workspace and fix problems immediately.

Strength Training for Life

➡ Continued from page 1.

3. **Allow 48 hours before you exercise the muscle group again** (don't do the same exercise every day).
4. **Light intensity** (it's hard for you to repeat the exercise 15 times against the resistance) is best for older persons or previously sedentary adults starting exercise.

As you gain strength, you can increase the amount of resistance as your ability to repeat the exercise increases to 15 times. For best results, consider investing in a few sessions with a personal trainer (certified by a national organization such as the ACSM at acsm.org).

Important: Talk to your health care provider before starting a resistance exercise program if you have health problems, such as high blood pressure or diabetes.

